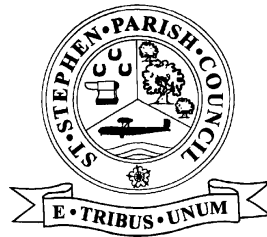


ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL



GRANTS AND DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNTS POLICY

Adopted: October 2021
Revised June 2022
Review Date: February 2023
Revised/Adopted July 2023
Revised Oct24, Apr25 Adopted Apr 25
Review Date: May 2026

St Stephen Parish Council covers the areas of
Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street.

THE PARISH CENTRE STATION ROAD BRICKET WOOD ST ALBANS AL2 3PJ
TEL: 01923 681443

Grants and Discretionary Discounts Policy

The purpose of this document is to help those wishing to apply for a grant or a discount on the hiring costs of the St Stephen Parish Council facilities to do so.

INTRODUCTION

St Stephen Parish Council is permitted to award grants to organisations to support their activities in the Parish. The Council takes great care in the awarding of public funds.

The contribution made by many organisations and individuals to the wellbeing of the local community is recognised by the Council as important to our society. The purpose of any grant or discount given by the Council is to support initiatives in the local community and to help create opportunities for the residents of Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street that are not, as a matter of course, funded by the Council.

There is a limited budget each year and guidance will be given to applicants as to how much money is available in a specific financial year. It is important that all questions on the application form are fully answered and that any appropriate additional information, which supports an application, is provided. Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from council officers on these matters.

Grants and discounts are considered at Finance Committee meetings, which occur quarterly. For the dates, check with the parish office or check the meetings calendar on the Parish Council website. The form should be submitted at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.

Grants and discounts awarded should be in line with the aims of St Stephen Parish Council, listed below:

- to support our local communities, encourage inclusion and diversity
- to protect and enhance our local environment
- to promote participation, good management and efficiency

Applications for grants and discounts must be made on an official Parish Council application form, available from the Parish Office or Centres Manager.

1. GRANT FUNDING

Level of Funding

The level of funding available may vary each year depending on the Council's budget. The total grant fund for 2024/25 is £5000. Individual grants are normally restricted to a maximum of 20% of the total Grants budget (£1000). The Council will consider each request on its own merits. Evidence of match funding will be welcomed.

Conditions of Grant Funding

Applications will be considered from individuals as well as organisations. The Council will usually only consider requests for specific projects as opposed to ongoing running costs.

Grant applications WILL NOT be considered from:

- Organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party or to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion and gender
- Private organisations operated as a business to make a profit or surplus
- Projects that have already taken place (retrospective funding is not permitted)

Applications from religious groups will be considered where a clear benefit to the wider community can be demonstrated irrespective of their religious beliefs. Compliance with this requirement will need to be demonstrated throughout the project.

The organisation will normally be expected to have clearly written aims and objectives, a written constitution and membership rules, copies of which should be submitted as part of the application

All applications must demonstrate clearly how a grant will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish.

An organisation is required to submit audited accounts or accounts that have been independently examined by a suitably qualified person, for the previous financial year or, in the case of a newly formed organisation, a detailed budget/actuals and business plan.

An organisation is required to have a bank account in its own name and specify charity registration number if applicable

Ongoing commitments to award grants or discounts in future years will not be made. A fresh application will be required each year.

Due account will be taken of the extent to which funding has been sought or secured from other sources or the organisation's own fundraising activities. Advice on other grant sources may be obtained from council officers or Communities 1st (www.communities1st.org.uk)

2. DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNTS

St Stephen Parish Council is able to provide discretionary discounts on the hiring costs of the St Stephen Parish Council facilities to local groups and for certain fundraising activities. A Discretionary Discount can only be applied against the charges arising from the hire of the Council's facilities.

Community organisations

- a) A Discretionary Discount will be considered for the following 'approved organisations' without the need to complete a Discretionary Discount application:
 - i. 100% discount for committee meetings (including AGMs) as well as one special event per annum held by the Residents' Associations, namely: Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street Residents' Associations, Bricket Wood Management Committee (SADC) and the Community Rail Partnership
- b) Other organisations may be considered upon application for a discount of up to 75%.
- c) Booking requests for the forthcoming year should be submitted to the Clerk by 1st November of the preceding year i.e. 1st November 2025 for the financial year 2026/27.
- d) Non-fundraising applications must demonstrate clearly how a discount will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish.

Charitable Fundraising events

Application for a fundraising event from a registered charity or Community Interest Company (CIC)

- a) A Discretionary Discount will be considered for fundraising events by a registered charity or CIC on application and amount to be decided at the discretion of the Parish Council: follows:

Application for a fundraising event on behalf of a registered charity or CIC

- a) A Discretionary Discount will be considered for fundraising events on behalf of a registered charity or CIC. Successful applicants will be required to provide evidence within 28 days of the event, from the charity/CIC confirming the proceeds received.

Commercial activities

- a) A Discretionary Discount will only be considered for commercial activities for the purposes of promoting new business at one of the Council's facilities on application as follows:
 - Promotional rates, agreed at the discretion of the Council, will apply to new hirers for a period up to and not exceeding three months.
- b) Non-fundraising applications must demonstrate clearly how a discount will be of benefit to the local community within the Parish.

GRANT / DISCOUNT APPLICATION DECISION

Grants and discretionary discounts are considered by the Finance Committee/Full Council. The application must be submitted to the Parish Clerk at least three weeks before the date of the committee meeting. Dates of future meetings are available on the website meetings calendar or enquire with the Parish Office. If the application is incomplete and the committee requires further information to reach a decision this could delay the decision by up to three months so please ensure that you have answered all the questions and provided details of recent accounts.

Applicants are able to attend the council meeting when the grant applications will be considered. They will be able to speak for up to 3 minutes at the beginning of the meeting.

The Council may make the award of any grant or discount subject to any additional conditions and requirements it considers appropriate.

When a decision has been made by the Council, applicants will be informed as soon as possible as to the outcome. This will generally be by email. Should a grant be approved then the Council aims to send payment to the organisation by BACS the following month.

AFTER THE DECISION

Acknowledgments of financial support received from the Council will be required on documentation and any promotional material or other media. If the Parish Council makes it conditional on the awarding of the grant, successful applicants must agree to:

- Acknowledge St Stephen Parish Council as a funder in the media
- Agree to any reasonable joint publicity the Parish Council may request
- Provide a statement or report of how the money has been used
- Provide photographs which can be used on social media and in Parish Council publicity material

GRANT / DISCOUNT REVIEW

Where requested, successful applicants must provide receipts or other evidence of expenditure within 12 months of receipt of the grant award. Applicants should show that funds have been used for the purpose specified in the grant application.

Applicants should complete a feedback form, outlining the benefit of the project to the community within 12 months of receipt of the grant award.

If the organisation ceases to exist for any reason prior to spending the grant or fails to spend the granted funds within 12 months of the award, the Council may ask for all or part of the money to be returned.

Successful discount applicants for fundraising events will need to provide evidence, within 28 days of the event, from the charity confirming the proceeds received.